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Contact: Katherine Levasseur
Director of External and Governmental Affairs
katherine.levasseur@vsc.edu

Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees Receives Name Recommendation for New Unified Institution

MONTPELIER, VT —Today the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System (VSCS) received the name recommendation for the new institution unifying Castleton University, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College.

In June, the VSCS hired [VisionPoint Marketing](#), a company ‘committed to 100% higher ed marketing and nothing else’ to conduct audience research, make a name recommendation, and develop the brand identity for the new institution. Today, VisionPoint made the name recommendation presentation to the Board. The recommendation comes after extensive audience research that will inform the brand identity for the new institution. Over the past two months, VisionPoint conducted 31 group sessions with students, faculty, staff, leadership, alumni, and community members; a brand perception study with over 3,000 respondents from across the VSCS and the state of Vermont; a targeted brand workshop with 25 participants across the three institutions; and deep-dive research into each institution to understand their missions, visions, values, histories, geographies, and demographics.

The recommended name is Vermont State University.

Chancellor Sophie Zdatny noted how pleased the VSCS is with the comprehensive research VisionPoint did to inform the name Vermont State University. “This is a well-founded and strategic recommendation and I am truly excited by the results of the research and the name recommendation. Because Vermont State University uses a nationally established and well-recognized naming convention, we have an incredible opportunity to shape the brand and identity of the university, bringing the vision of the institution to life and sharing all the features that uniquely qualify our unified institution to deliver the education of the future to learners across the state and beyond.

The research strongly indicated how intrinsic Vermont is to the identity of this new institution, both in the well-established Vermont brand and in our status as a public institution. ‘University’ rose to the top as critical to communicate the prestige, quality, and level of education provided by our unified institution. Additionally, there was a clear sense of commitment to the future through advancement, innovation, and technology as a hallmark of what this university should and will be. I look forward to seeing how these indicators will be incorporated into the brand and identity of the new university.”



VSCS Board Chair Lynn Dickinson agreed, adding, “the name is the first of many critical steps to come in establishing the identity of the new institution. This is a strong recommendation that leverages both the well-known Vermont brand and our status as a public institution, conveys the state’s commitment to the VSCS and public higher education, and positions us to compete nationally by encapsulating our diverse strengths in a logical and well-established way. I am looking forward to receiving the public comments on this work ahead of the special Board meeting next week. Additionally, I am excited to see the results of the continued work as we develop and enhance the mission, vision, brand identity, and academic structure of the new institution.”

The VSCS is seeking public comment on the name in advance of the Board decision on Wednesday, September 29. Public comment may be made at [this link](#) and will be shared with the Board in advance of the meeting. The Board will also hold a listening session on Wednesday, September 29th at 6:30 p.m. during the Board meeting at www.vsc.edu/botzoom. To sign up to speak at the Board meeting, visit www.vsc.edu/signup.

The Board meeting will be livestreamed at www.vsc.edu/live, but those wishing to share a comment with the Board must be in the Zoom meeting at www.vsc.edu/botzoom.

For the benefit of Vermont, the Vermont State Colleges system provides affordable, high quality, student-centered, and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study, consistent with student aspirations and regional and state needs. The Vermont State Colleges system includes Castleton University, the Community College of Vermont, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College. Learn more at www.vsc.edu.

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